

REMARKS

A. Request for Reconsideration

Applicant has carefully considered the matters raised by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action but remains of the position that patentable subject matter is present. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Examiner's position based on the certified English translation of the priority document JP-2002-343435, the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

B. Claim Status and Amendments

Claims 14-35 are presented for further prosecution.

Claim 34 has been amended to correct a typographical error. Support for this amendment can be found in claim 14.

C. The Office Action

Claims 14-17, 19, 23-26, 28, and 32-35 had been rejected as being unpatentable over Marshall (EP 0540203) in view of Kondo (U.S. 2003/0149130). Claims 18 and 27 had been rejected as being unpatentable over Marshall in view of Kondo and Takami (U.S. 5,721,020). Claims 20, 22, 29, and 31 had been rejected as being unpatentable over Marshall in view of Kondo and Ushirogouchi (U.S. 6,959,986). Claims 21 and 30 had been

rejected as being unpatentable over Marshall in view of Kondo, Takami, and Ushirogouchi.

1. The foreign priority date of the present invention is prior to the U.S. filing dates of Kondo and Ushirogouchi

The Examiner had cited Kondo to reject each of the claims of the present application. In addition, Ushirogouchi had been cited against some of the dependent claims.

The present application claims the priority of Japanese Application JP-2002-343435 filed on November 27, 2002. This Japanese filing date is prior to the December 17, 2002 and April 22, 2003 U.S. filing dates of Kondo and Ushirogouchi.

Applicant has enclosed a certified English translation of the '435 priority document to perfect the claim of priority and to remove Kondo and Ushirogouchi as prior art. Support for the claims of the present application can be found in the following portions of the '435 priority document:

Present Application	Priority Document	Present Application	Priority Document
claim 14	par. 28 and claims 1-4	claim 25	claim 6
claim 15	claim 1	claim 26	claim 7
claim 16	claim 6	claim 27	claim 8
claim 17	claim 7	claim 28	claim 9
claim 18	claim 8	claim 29	claim 11
claim 19	claim 9	claim 30	claim 11
claim 20	claim 11	claim 31	claim 11
claim 21	claim 11	claim 32	par. 28 and claims 1-4
claim 22	claim 11	claim 33	claim 2
claim 23	par. 28, claim 1-3 and claim 5	claim 34	par. 28, claim 1-3 and claim 5
claim 24	claim 1	claim 35	claim 2

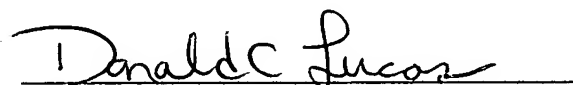
Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is entitled to the benefit of the Japanese priority date. It is therefore believed that all of the prior art rejections are overcome.

D. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing and the enclosed, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should any extensions of time or fees be necessary in order to maintain this Application in pending condition, appropriate requests are hereby made and authorization is given to debit Account # 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,

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Encl: Certified English translation of JP-2002-343435
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